

Istook, Bush Celebrate Tax Cut for Oklahomans

Washington, D.C. - Congressman Ernest Istook (R-OK) attended a White House ceremony today where President George W. Bush signed into law a tax cut providing \$1.3 trillion of tax relief to Americans, including \$11.6 billion for Oklahomans.

“It’s been twenty years since we had this much tax relief-and I hope it won’t be another twenty years before we do it again,” said Istook. “President Bush deserves credit for sticking to his principles to make this happen; we in Congress tried for years to reduce taxes, but the former White House kept vetoing tax relief. Yet we can continue to retire the national debt and still lower the tax burden on working folks. ”

"Unfortunately, the folks who blocked tax relief for years still had enough leverage in Washington to insist that this tax relief isn't permanent; it will expire in ten years unless it's renewed. This isn't a mystery novel; nobody should have to wait until the end to learn how it turns out. I want this to be permanent tax relief, so I'll keep pushing for that and for other tax relief, to let people have their own money back."

Most of the 972,000 Oklahomans receiving a tax rebate can expect their checks by October 1. These Oklahomans will share \$418 million of relief through this initial rebate.

The law reduces the marriage penalty, phases out the estate tax, doubles the child tax credit from \$500 to \$1,000 per child, and increases the maximum IRA contribution limits for traditional and Roth IRAs. It also cuts every tax rate and will create a new 10 percent bracket retroactive to January 1 on the first \$6,000 of income for individuals, \$10,000 for the heads of households and \$12,000 for couples.

Congress had tried to eliminate the marriage tax last year, but former-President Clinton vetoed the bill. Under current law, the standard deduction is \$4,550 for singles and \$7,660 for couples. Under the new law, in 2001, the standard deduction for couples would be \$9,100.

The law also includes several education provisions, such as an above-the-line deduction on higher education expenses and an increase in the annual limit on contributions to education IRAs from \$500 to \$2,000.

Other tax credits include an adoption tax credit, dependent care tax credit and a tax credit for employer-provided childcare.

“We’re shipping money back home to the taxpayers,” said Istook. “It’s their money and they’ll make the best decisions about how to spend it or save it.”

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See how much you will save from the tax cut bill. Visit the Americans for Tax Relief and its tax relief calculator on the Web at www.ATR.org.

To access a recording of Cong. Istook regarding the tax cut, follow these instructions:

1. Dial 202-226-4760.
2. Enter message number and hit the pound key: 0193105 #